3 Trade in America 2

57

AN

ESSAY

CONCERNING

SLAVERY,

AND THE

DANGER

JAMAICA

Is expos'd to from the

Too great Number of SLAVES,

AND THE

Too little CARE that is taken to manage THEM,

And a PROPOSAL to prevent the further Importation of Negroes into that Iſland.

Let Men beware how they neglect, and ſuffer Matter of Trouble to be prepar'd; for no Man can forbid the Spark, nor tell whence it may come.

Lord BACON's *Eſſays.*

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THE INTRODUCTION.

THE Iſland of *Jamaica* being of the greateſt Importance to its Mother Country, and at the ſame Time ſo inſecure, that the Inhabitants are not only alarm'd by every trifling Armament of the Enemy, but under the greateſt Apprehenſions frequently from their own Slaves, it becomes a Matter of publick Concern to conſider how to render ſo valuable a Poſſeſſion ſafe and ſure, and free from the Dangers with which it is ſo manifeſtly threatned. The meaneſt Capacities may furniſh Hints uſeful to the greateſt; in this Perſwaſion, I humbly offer, in the following Sheets my poor Thoughts, and make ſome Propoſals which I

am far from thinking adequate to the Occaſion, but I hope they will be ſufficient to excite Men of greater Abilities to propoſe better and more ſuitable ones; for ſomething muſt be done, and that ſpeedily, or this valuable Colony will be undoubtedly loſt, and the *Britiſh* Empire in the *Weſt-Indies* much curtail'd, if not totally ruin'd.

The firſt Thing Phyſicians do is, to enquire into the Cauſe and true Nature of the Diſtemper; one lucky Circumſtance, and perhaps the only one in the preſent Caſe, is, that ours cannot be unknown, our Danger being plainly owing to the too great Number of Negroes in Proportion to white Perſons, being at leaſt as ten to one, and the too little Care that is taken to manage thoſe Negroes. To ſhow the Neceſſity of being more careful and bringing our Slaves under Diſcipline,

is the End of this ſmall Tract; the Means propos'd are very few, and indeed reducible to one Point, *viz.* that of having a due Proportion of Freemen (of one Colour or another, white, black or yellow, ſince white Men enough cannot, at leaſt immediately be got) to Slaves. My Deſign in hindering Slaves from being bred to Trades, or employ'd in the Houſe being, that there ſhould be no more than what are neceſſary for the Field or ſuch kind of Drudgery as cannot be carried on but by them, and that white, or at leaſt Freemen, ſhould be employ'd in all other Services, and that even in the Field the Drivers ſhould be free, and not Slave put over Slave.

I may ſeem inconſiſtent with my ſelf, in firſt of all proving Slavery to be contrary to the Law of God and Nature, and then implicitly allowing it, by propoſing how Slaves

ſhould be regulated. I cou'd wiſh with all my Heart, that Slavery was aboliſh'd entirely, and I hope in Time it may be ſo; but to do it at once, would be itſelf a great Evil, and a Ruin to Thouſands whoſe Wealth is wholly, or chiefly veſted in them. Therefore I ſhall be content, if no more Slaves be imported, and thoſe we have put under good Regulations,--- Time will do the reſt, which is the beſt Mender, when Things are put in a good Train, as it is the gentleſt one, doing its Buſineſs by imperceptable Touches and Degrees.

Nor is it from a moral View only that I am for hindering the further Importation of Slaves, and making the other Regulations, but from a political one too; it being ſincerely my Opinion, that the Iſland muſt otherwiſe be inevitably ruin'd. We have eſcap'd many Dangers, Symptoms

toms uſually forerun the Diſtemper, Providence always gives ſufficient Warnings, we have had ours; Providence has done its Part, we ſhould do ours, in taking Warning and altering our Courſe.

I lay the greateſt Streſs upon the Point of Security, which is a Conſideration I ſhould think would affect every one. I own I am affected with the moral one; but if the Parliament ſhould ſtill think that no Branch of Trade whatever (tho' it be in human Fleſh, in the Lives and Liberties of our own Species) is to be parted with upon any Account; let them go on buying in *Africa*, to ſell in *New-Spain*, but let no more be ſold in our Colonies ---let us be Wicked ſtill, but let us not be Fools. When we have already more Slaves than are conſiſtent with our Safety, let us not bring

bring in more and more to make our Perdition ſure.--- And ſince the Planters themſelves have not the Head or the Heart to find out or make uſe of proper Remedies, and cannot forbear indulging themſelves both in their Indolence and fond Deſire of more and more Negroes, ſurely the Parliament at Home ſhould interpoſe, were it only out of Pity to theſe their Children, who know not what they do, who are playing with Edge-Tools, which they cannot manage, and ſhould be prevented from cutting themſelves. And ſince white Men cannot be got, (and never will be got till other-gueſs Meaſures are purſu'd) I think the Planters ſhou'd be made to manage as well as they can with the Materials which they have at Hand, throwing their Negroes into ſuch a Form and putting them under ſuch a Diſcipline, as that inſtead of there being

being any Danger of their rebelling, they might be made uſeful in withſtanding a Foreign Enemy, and what then would hurt the Iſland ?--- I know this is far from being palatable to the Planters, their Humour, Pride and ſilly Prejudices being againſt it, but I am ſure it would be wholſome, and for their Good ; and I cannot think that the Parliament of *Great-Britain* ought to riſque the Security of ſo valuable an Iſland as *Jamaica*, and defer doing what is abſolutely neceſſary for its Safety, out of a Deference to the Humour of a few Planters, and until they are pleas'd to think rightly themſelves.

Let it be conſider'd beſides, that one Regiment would then be ſufficient for the Security of the Iſland, and the *Jamaica* Squadron might have other Views beſides that of merely defending the Iſland and

getting

getting a few Prizes, they might go wherever ſome national Service call'd them, to Leeward, if they pleas'd, and be abſent for Months together, and the Iſland in no Fear of being ſwallow'd up in the mean time; this is likewiſe a Conſideration methinks not unworthy even the Notiee of the Parliament.

I have introduced in the Dialogues but two Perſons, a *Planter* and an *Officer*, as I thought them ſufficient fully to expreſs my Sentiments in the Matter; and I ſhould have been glad to have done without them, not perceiving in myſelf any Talents for that kind of Writing, but I found I could not diſcuſs ſome of the Points ſo thoroughly and minutely any other Way. The Reader therefore muſt not expect to find either of the Characters drawn with any Niceneſs or Accuracy. I have put many

ny Things in the Officer's Mouth, that might as well have been ſpoken by a Merchant, a Lawyer, or a meer Gentleman of no Profeſſion; but I choſe the Character of an Officer, as ſuch a-one might be ſuppoſed to have ſeen more of the World, and to have freer Notions of Things than a *Jamaica* Merchant, and to be more idle, and more apt to indulge himſelf in unprofitable Speculations than a Lawyer. I have given him a ſtrong Air of Enthuſiaſm, which ſeemed neceſſary to me, as one of another Turn could not, with any Propriety, be made ſo very zealous as he is, in an Affair which regards his private Intereſt ſo little.—— But to deal ingenuouſly with my Reader, another and truer Reaſon may be (as he ſpeaks my Sentiments moſtly, that I am myſelf not a little ting'd with that Paſſion, ſo that I

may

may have drawn my own Picture unawares, only exaggerating the Features, being as like the Officer, as Sir *Roger de Coverly* in the Spectator was to the *Saracen's Head*; to which the Reader will be apt to add this further Similitude, that they are both Sign-Poſt Paintings.

Believe me, Reader, however lightly and indifferently I may have treated this Matter, I know nothing more ſerious, or more worthy the Attention of the Legiſlature, unleſs it be to pay off the publick Debts, and to revive the Militia of *England*, that a Parcel of *Highlanders*, with the Scum of the *Low-lands*, may not range as they liſt through a once warlike Land with Impunity, proclaiming a Popiſh Pretender, on *Engliſh* Ground, where their moſt regular and royal Armies never put their Foot formerly without Trembling, and ſeldom without due Chaſtiſement.

A

DIALOGUE

IN

SPANISH-TOWN

BETWEEN AN

OFFICER and a PLANTER.

P. I am afraid I interrupt you; you are ſo ſurrounded with Books; — for an Officer to be ſo ſtudious is ſomething extraordinary.

O. Nobody that I am acquainted with is in Town, I muſt be at my Poſt, ſo I amuſe myſelf as you ſee, and I think myſelf happy in having ſome Taſte this Way, not being obliged to go into Company I don't like; but Nobody loves to ſee a

Friend more than I do, ſo away go Books; and I aſſure you I am heartily glad to ſee you.

P. You will give me Leave to look upon them; bleſs me, what are here! *Puffendorf*, *Locke*, *Woollaſton*, and I know not who: I think I ſee a Bible too; what the Duce can this be for? Some Point of Divinity or Politicks, ſomething for the Preſs ſure!

O. Why, don't ſay any thing and I'll tell you; between Friends I am a little crazy; I have a Crack, that is certain, and yet I cannot find in my Heart to be ſorry for it;— there is a Pleaſure in being mad, which we mad Men only know, as a mad Poet has ſung, having found it out experimentally. I am writing, and for the Preſs, tho' not Meſſrs. *Baldwin's*, as you will gueſs by the Subject. I am endeavouring to prove, don't be ſurpriz'd, that Slavery, as it is now practiſed amongſt us, is contrary to the Law of God and Nature. I confute by right good Arguments, the Authorities by which the Chriſtians of theſe latter Days have been induc'd to admit of that State, which was condemn'd by the primitive Fathers, and is ſo entirely

oppoſite to the whole Tenour, and very Spirit of Chriſtianity.

P. But you have not only the modern Chriſtian, but the ancient Heathen, *Greek* and *Roman*, as well as Cuſtom againſt you; it is thought to be agreeable to Law by the greateſt Men at preſent of that Profeſſion, whatever Opinion *Holt* and others might have had formerly; and I never heard it was condemned by our preſent Divines.

O. That is the Reaſon why I ſaid I was a little crazy, I know the Difficulties I am to encounter; when Wit, Learning and Eloquence deſign to diſplay their Talents in Favour of prevailing Errors that tend, or are thought to tend to Mens Intereſt, plain down-right Reaſon has little Chance to get the better of Prejudice and Intereſt thus ſupported: I know the Abuſes I muſt ſuffer, as Madman, Viſionary, Enthuſiaſt, *&c.* yet knowing this, I will on; I feel an Impulſe;——

Perhaps 'tis Sacred, and I muſt obey.

Let others toil to be at the Top of Affairs, do you Planters labour on, buying

more and more Negroes, getting more and more Land, though already you have more than enough of both; let thoſe of you that retain a Taſte for your own Colour, intreague to get this and that Woman, I will go on ſcribbling and combating this Error. Do you build fine Houſes, after your Faſhion, for yourſelf or Miſtreſs, I will have as much Pleaſure with my Caſtle in the Air.

P. You will allow however, the Pleaſure you have aſſigned me and my Countrymen, to be more real and ſubſtantial, not ſo chimerical as yours.

O. Your Objects are real indeed, but your liking depends upon Fancy, the moſt fickle Thing in Nature; mine is founded in Reaſon, for I endeavour to do good, and Reaſon you know is invariable, always willing and nilling the ſame, ſo I ſhall hold out the longeſt.

P. You at firſt own'd you were a little crazy, and you now talk of your Reaſon; one would think you had found out the Art of reconciling what *Terence* thought ſo contradictory, *Inſanire cum ratione.* But pray let's ſee what you have wrote.

O.

O. Since you have caught me in the Fact, and will have it, there take it as it is, you will ſee 'tis not finiſh'd.

SECTION I.

That Slavery, as it is now practis'd in America, *is againſt the Law of God and Nature.*

THAT, in a State of Nature, Men are equal in reſpect of Dominion, is a Maxim unconteſted by any Writer of Note upon Politicks, and is indeed as evident, as any Propoſition in *Euclid.* Since then Men are free by Nature, how come they to loſe their Birth-right? the Ways are three,

I. Some have ſold it for a certain and more plentiful Maintenance (as *Eſau* did for Pottage) which is *Puffendorf*'s Opinion of the Origin of Slavery.

2*dly*, Some have forfeited it by their Crimes.

3*dly*, Some have had it taken away from them by Force.—

The two firſt Ways are agreeable to Nature; for, as to the firſt, a Man may certainly part with his own and exchange it for what he thinks better;— and as to the ſecond, it is for the Good of Mankind in general, that thoſe that offend againſt the Peace of Society, ſhould ſuffer for their Offence by Loſs of Liberty, Life, or Goods, as ſhall ſeem meet to the Legiſlature. Theſe two Ways are likewiſe agreeable to the Old Teſtament, as appears by ſeveral Texts; I ſhall mention but two. *Exod.* chap. xxii. ver. 3. ſpeaking of a Thief that is breaking up, *He ſhould make full Reſtitution, if he have nothing, then he ſhall be* ſold *for his Theft.* And *Leviticus* chap. xxv. ver. 47. *If a Sojourner or Stranger wax rich by thee, and thy Brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and* ſell himſelf *unto the Stranger*, &c.

But as to the third Way, which is call'd the Right of War, that there is no ſuch Right in the Reaſon of Things; that, however it may have been practis'd and allow'd of by many and great Nations, and thence been introduc'd with great Solemnity

lemnity into the Law of Nations, and ſupported by grave Authorities; yet, that it is contrary to the Law of Nature, and likewiſe to the Law of God, as contain'd in the Old and New Teſtament, is what I ſhall endeavour to prove.

The Arguments of thoſe that maintain this Right of War, as it is call'd, run thus; one Nation they ſay, with Reſpect to another, is as one Man in the State of Nature, would be to another.—Now two Men in that State, that ſhould fight for the Poſſeſſion of ſomething they both had a Mind to, would certainly each have a Right to kill the other during the Conflict; and as the Conqueror would of Courſe have the Power, he might put his Power in Execution.—From whence they infer, that he might enſlave him, arguing thus;— Life without Liberty is better than no Life; therefore, he that has a Right to take away the greater good, and only takes the leſs, does a Favour, can do no Injury; for ſhould the conquer'd Party happen to prefer dying, he may oblige his Conqueror to kill him, and ſo have his own Choice. This Argument being built upon a falſe Foundation muſt fall to the Ground; for

tho' it is an undoubted Right of War to kill one's Adverſary, and two Combatants may kill the one the other, *during the Combat*; yet as ſoon as the Combat is over, and one yields up the Thing in Diſpute, the State of War ceaſes, and conſequently its Rights ceaſe with it. While the Battle laſts, Self-preſervation gives the Right to each to ſecure his own Life by taking that of his Adverſary; but the Battle being over, the Danger is over, and Self-preſervation can no longer be pleaded. And I appeal to the Common-ſenſe of Mankind, whether to take away in cool Blood the Life of thoſe that ſurrender, is not reckon'd cruel and inhumane. Our brave *Edward* the *Black Prince*, indeed kill'd his Priſoners, but not till the Enemy rallying, and the ſmall Number of his own Men made it abſolutely neceſſary, and upon that Footing he is juſtified by all Hiſtorians. Had he had enough Men to have guarded the Priſoners and fought the Enemy, he would have been inexcuſable. I inſtance in this, to ſhew, according to the common Senſe and Judgment of Mankind, that nothing juſtifies the taking away another Man's Life but to preſerve your own.

own. It is plain therefore, that a Conqueror, after the Conqueſt, has not that Pretence of Danger, and therefore cannot, by the Right of Conqueſt, take away his Adverſary's Life, and conſequently cannot take away his Liberty, his Right to the latter being founded on his Right to the other.

* Mr. *Locke*, who ſeems to allow Slavery, allows it upon the Suppoſition, that the Life was forfeited firſt, and indeed it cannot be ſupported upon no other Principle: But that Suppoſition being proved, if I miſtake not, by what I have ſaid before, to be without Foundation, his whole Argument falls with it to the Ground. It is plain therefore, that Conqueſt gives no Right; and that the only Reaſon why it has been thought to have done it, is for want of making the true Diſtinction between the Right of War and the Right of Conqueſt, which have been confounded and blended together as if they were the ſame,

* The Captive having deſerved to loſe his Life, *as we ſuppoſe*, it is no Injury to him to make him a Slave; and if he finds his Slavery more inſupportable than Life is ſweet, he may procure his Death at any Time, by diſobeying his Maſter. *Locke* in his ſecond Treatiſe of Government, cap. iv. § 23.

ſame, tho' indeed they are very different Ideas.

To me the preceding Argument ſeems concluſive; but we will ſuppoſe, for Argument Sake, that Conqueſt doth not put an End to the State of War, which being once entered into never ceaſes, but that it and its Rights always continue. In that Caſe it muſt be owned the Conqueror has a Right to kill the other, but the other has likewiſe the ſame Right, though not the ſame Power to kill him. Their Rights over the Life of each other are equal, though not the Power; but Power gives no Right. Should it be alledged, that he who has the Power, and forbears to make uſe of it, muſt do it upon ſome Terms; I anſwer, thoſe Terms muſt be explicit, they are not implied, they muſt be agreed to, and known before they can be agreed to. It is not a neceſſary Conſequence, that if a Conqueror ſpares the Life of his Adverſary, he muſt do it for the Sake of his Service. I appeal to any one what he would think of that Man, who having his Enemy down, ſhould hold his Sword at his Throat, and ſay, if you do not inſtantly

ſtantly promiſe that you and yours ſhall ſerve me and mine, as I, my Heirs and Aſſigns, their Heirs and Aſſigns for ever ſhall think fit, I will put you to Death, you Villain, this Moment: And whether, in caſe the other ſhould out of Fear, promiſe and ſwear perpetual Fealty and Service, for himſelf and Children: Whether, I ſay, ſuch a Promiſe would be binding in Equity and good Conſcience, whether it would not be in its Nature void, as obtained by *Dureſſe*.

Thus, I think it plainly appears, even upon the Suppoſition that the State of War ſtill continues after Conqueſt, that no Right to a Man's perpetual Service can be founded upon it; and indeed the Thing ſpeaks itſelf, for all ſocial Rights muſt be founded upon Compact, and the State of War muſt ceaſe before the Compact can begin; for there cannot be any Compact or Agreement but between Perſons that are free, and in their own Power.—— In ſhort, to ſum up all, no one has a Right to take away the Life of another, but to preſerve his own, or to puniſh ſome Crime; the Right to puniſh which, every one has in

a State of Nature; but the Magiſtrate is alone inveſted with it in a civil Society.

If I ſhould be aſked, what the Conqueror gains then by his Conqueſt, and if he has not a Right to the Perſon, what Right he has acquired? I anſwer, a Right to the Thing in Diſpute, to that which occaſioned the Quarrel, or Reſtitution with ample Coſts and Damages, if it was for an Injury received; this is plainly all the Right the Conqueror acquires, and one would wonder how any other came to be thought of, if we did not find by Experience, that whatever Princes, or great Men think convenient, Civilians are ready to prove lawful. For I would appeal to any one, whether he can in Conſcience really think, that he has a Right to the perpetual Service of every one he is able to beat, with whom he quarrels, or picks a Quarrel. But ſurely one's Nature will not ſuffer any one to allow that another has a Right to him, becauſe that other happens to be ſtronger, and picks a Quarrel with him, that he may enter upon, and take Poſſeſſion of his Perſon by divine Right. Yes, ſays *Itornius*, the Conqueror has a

Right,

Right, and a divine Right; " for (as we " find him quoted by *Puffendorf*, Lib. vi. " c. 3.) ſince all Victory is from God, and " by his Providence the Conqueror gets " into his Hands the Perſon of the Ene- " my, it follows that the Life of the " Captive might be immediately taken " away; but ſince Humanity would *ſcarce-* " *ly* have ſuffered, that the Victor ſhould " always exerciſe this Rigour on an un- " armed and ſupplicant Perſon, it was " thought convenient to forbear Execu- " tion, and to retain his Power over the " Priſoner, who might thus be of good " Uſe in the Affairs of Life." What Stuff! for I muſt appeal again to common Senſe, whether, in every Quarrel between two Men in a State of Nature, or every War between two Nations, and in every Battle or Skirmiſh during that War, it can without the greateſt Preſumption and Impiety be ſaid, that God ſits in Judgment, deciding and decreeing the Poſſeſſion of one Man to another, juſt as the one happens to be ſtronger or weaker than the other. It is a very good and noble Metaphor to ſay, when two independent Pow-

ers

ers are forced to have Recourſe to Arms, that they appeal to Heaven, that God is their Umpire, there being none upon Earth. But to found a Right upon a Metaphor is ſomething odd, tho' not uncommon; witneſs Tranſubſtantiation, and indeed almoſt all the Pope's Pretences, as well as thoſe of abſolute, indefeaſible Monarchs; which well conſidered, have, moſt of them, no other Foundation. But no one ſeemed to have underſtood the Force of this Figure better than one of the *Roman* Emperors, who, by Dint of it, proved himſelf to be of a different Nature from his Subjects, they being, metaphorically, Sheep, and his Imperial Majeſty, by the ſame Figure, a Shepherd.

Having thus ſhewn the Falſity of the vain, tho' ſubtle Arguments, by which it has been pretended, that Conqueſt gives a Right of making Slaves, I ſhall have no Difficulty in proving it to be contrary to the Law of Nature: I need only for that refer the Reader to *Woollaſton*'s Chapter of Truths reſpecting Mankind; and I appeal to his own Conſcience, whether it is not contrary to every one of them. Indeed there

there is an Aſſertion in one of them, that would make one tremble to think of, *viz.* that he that begins an Injury, is the Cauſe of all the Miſchief that enſues: Upon which Reaſoning we are anſwerable, not only for all the Murders the Negroes commit on White Men, in endeavouring to recover their Liberty, but likewiſe for all the Executions we make of them, whether in the Field, or on the Gibbet: But this will open ſo diſagreeable a Scene, that I chuſe to let down the Curtain, and ſee no more of it. That it is contrary to the New Teſtament, the Goſpel of Peace and Love, which makes us all Brethren, and teaches us to love our very Enemies, will be allowed at firſt Sight. That it is likewiſe contrary to the Old Teſtament, will appear by one or two Texts that I will quote, after premiſing what cannot be denied, *viz.* that the New Teſtament, having broke down the Bounds that ſeparated the *Jew* from the *Gentile*, all Nations that believe the Goſpel are obliged by it to obſerve the ſame Rules of Behaviour towards thoſe of other Nations, as the *Jews* were obliged to obſerve one towards the other,

when

when ſome of the Tribes were at War with the other Tribes, as when the two of *Judah* and *Benjamin* were at War with the other ten. In ſhort, the Old Teſtament being a Rule to *Chriſtians*, as far as it is not altered or abrogated by the New, and both together, as far as they agree, making but one Rule,—— a *Chriſtian* is obliged to treat every one, of what Nation ſoever, as a *Hebrew* was obliged to treat a *Hebrew*. Now it doth not appear, that when the Tribes were at War with one the other, they made their Captives Slaves; but the contrary ſeems moſt plain, for even thoſe they bought were to be free in ſeven Years, *Exod.* cap. xxi. ver. 2. If thou buy any *Hebrew* Servant, ſix Years ſhall he ſerve, and in the ſeventh he ſhall go out free for nothing. The ſame is repeated in *Deut.* cap. xv. ver. 12.

SECT.

SECT. II.

That the Sugar Colonies muſt be ruined, if Slavery is not put upon a better Footing.

I Have heard of a Preſbyterian Teacher at *Edinburgh*, one, that like our *Daniel Burges*, did not diſdain to enliven his Precepts with familiar and merry Inſtances, who having often declaimed againſt the expenſive and debauched Way of Living of the young People of that Town without any Effect, and being reſolved to try a new Argument, ſaid one Day from his Pulpit, Brethren, I have often told you, that if you did not leave off theſe Practices, you would certainly be damn'd; but behold! I now tell you what is worſe, you will ſurely go to the Abbey *. In Imitation

* The Place for Debtors.

of this worthy Divine, I having conſidered this Matter with regard to Right or Wrong in Morality, will conſider it with reſpect to Profit; whether it is for the Intereſt of *England*, or even this Iſland, that Things ſhould go on as they do, and it is my Opinion, conſidering the Inclination, or rather the Rage that Planters have for buying Negroes, and the little Care or Conduct that is uſed in the Management of them, that if ſome Stop be not put to it, or if better Diſcipline be not obſerved, the Iſland muſt be over-run, and ruined by its own Slaves, even tho' the Enemy ſhould not take the Advantage of joining with them.

By the Poll-Tax in 1740, it appeared that the Negroes were ten times more in Number than the white Perſons, reckoning the Inhabitants excluſive of Sea-faring, and other tranſient Perſons, could, by the beſt Computation, amount to. Few large Plantations have one white Man to every thirty Negroes, as appears by the large Sums that are paid annually by thoſe that are deficient in that Reſpect. Negroes go on increaſing by Importations every Year; the *Whites* rather diminiſh yearly, certainly do not increaſe— What muſt this come to in the Courſe of a few Years?

One

One would imagine that Planters really think that *Negroes* are not of the ſame Species with us, but that being of a different Mold and Nature, as well as Colour, they were made intirely for our Uſe, with Inſtincts proper for that Purpoſe, having as great a Propenſity to Subjection, as we have to command, and loving Slavery as naturally as we do Liberty; and that there is no need of any Art or Diſcipline to ſubject ten Men or more, to one, no need of any Management, but that of themſelves they will moſt pleaſantly ſubmit to hard Labour, hard Uſages of all kind, Cruelties and Injuſtice at the Caprice of one white Man.—— Such, one would imagine, is the Planter's Way of Thinking.

There were a great many good Laws for the Government of Slaves made upon the firſt Settlement of the Iſland, but which are ſeldom or never executed;— the firſt Planters minded their own Buſineſs, ſaw themſelves the Inconveniencies that naturally ſpring from Servitude, as they aroſe, and adapted their Laws to redreſs them.— There are ſome good Laws ſtill wanting, but they claſhing with the Planter's im-

mediate Intereſt, which is all moſt of them mind at preſent, the Aſſembly have not been induced to enact them; in which however I muſt own they are not ſo much to be blamed; for what ſignifies making new Laws until the old ones are obey'd?

As no People are more thoughtleſs of Danger at a Diſtance, ſo I muſt own they are apprehenſive of it enough when it is at hand.— Upon the Conſpiracy in St. *John*'s Pariſh (and ſince I have given it ſuch a ſounding Name, it may be proper to inform the Reader, that about a Dozen Head Negroes of a few adjoining Plantations, were the Conſpirators; but they had ſuch an Influence over the others, and managed ſo artfully, that it was univerſally thought, that if they had not been providentially diſcovered, the Day before the intended Execution, and the Ringleaders ſeized, that Pariſh certainly, and probably Part of the neighbouring ones, would have been entirely ruined, and the Peace of the whole Iſland would have been broken by it. Upon this Conſpiracy, I ſay) the Civil and Military Officers were alert, and no Negroes

groes allowed to paſs without a Ticket, (which Regulation alone, had it been duly obſerved from the Time it was enacted, would in all Probability have hindered the Growth of the rebellious Negroes) but in a Month's Time, or leſs, the Maſters and very Overſeers were weary of ſigning their Names; the Caution was neglected, the Conſpiracy itſelf forgot, and looked upon as a Dream, though ſeveral poor Negroes were in reality burnt alive for it. A very few Months after, thirteen Men and ſeven Women from *Kingſton* and *Port-Royal* took it in their Heads to endeavour to live in the Woods and be free; they kept the Mountains for a Month, committing many Murders with Impunity, in ſpite of the Soldiers and Militia that were ſent againſt them, till they were firſt routed by the late rebellious Negroes that ſubmitted in 1739. Theſe thirteen Men only, with the ſeven Women, put *Kingſton*, and the adjacent Pariſhes, under the greateſt Alarm; and during the Alarm, the Tickets were again thought of, and ſome other Laws put in Execution in thoſe Pariſhes; but no ſooner was the Danger over, than

theſe Things were forgot again, and *Kingſton* and the other Pariſhes, took t'other Turn and fell quietly faſt a-ſleep again.

What ſhall we ſay is the Cauſe of this? Have they not Senſe to know how precarious their Condition muſt be, when thirteen Rogues only out of ſo many thouſand are able to bid them Defiance and give them ſuch Alarms? Can they be ignorant that their whole Conſtitution muſt be quite crazy, their whole Maſs of Blood vitiated, when ſuch ſmall Eruptions can endanger ſo much the whole Body, and when they break out ſo faſt one after another? To what, I ſay, can we attribute this, to Indolence in ſome, and perhaps Stupidity in others; but in far the greateſt Part 'tis owing to a narrow Selfiſhneſs, and total Unconcern for every Thing that doth not regard their immediate Intereſt. Many ſee the Symptom of a Country approaching to its Ruin, but they fancy it may laſt their Time, they may ſell out and get Home firſt, and what comes afterwards they care not. They don't deſire any thing to be mended, oppoſe every Scheme, cannot bear to hear any propos'd which may cauſe Examinations into our real Condition, the

Weakneſs

Weakneſs of which being diſcover'd, might hurt the preſent Price of Eſtates; ſo all is well they cry, 'till they have ſold and realiz'd. All that bought *South-Sea* Stock at the exorbitant Prices it ſold at in 1720, were not bad Calculators, many knew it could not hold, but all they wanted, was, that it ſhould hold till they could ſell out at ſtill greater Prices. This is at preſent pretty much the Caſe of many a *Jamaica* Planter, and the End muſt be the ſame if ſome ſtrong Remedies be not applied. And what is that Remedy? Truly I know but one that would be effectual, and that is, that the further Importation of Negroes for Sale in the Iſland ſhould be forbid by a *Britiſh* Act of Parliament.

Many other Regulations I own might do and be better, could they be executed; nay, the Laws in being, with very few Additions, would be entirely effectual, were they executed; but it's plain they never were, nor never will be. Now, the good of the Law I propoſe, conſiſts in this, that it muſt be executed, it is ſo plain and ſimple it cannot be evaded; there is no room for Tricks or Concealments, the

Sale of imported Negroes being forbid, and declar'd void, if made, will effectually hinder People from throwing away their Money in ſuch Sales: And this once being eſtabliſh'd, the People will of themſelves fall into Methods and Regulations to make the moſt of the Negroes they have, when they find they cannot have more. And ſurely one may venture to ſay that not one half of the Work is done by our Slaves, as might be with good Management. Moſt of the lazy Houſe-Slaves that now ſtand in one the others Way, would be ſent into the Field, their proper Place; Buſineſs within Door ſhould be done by White and Free-People. The Slave is for the Field only. As Drudgery in the Sun cannot be borne by the *Europeans*, therefore the Parliament hath indulg'd the Subject in the Colonies with the Power of having Negro-Slaves, that the Sugar Manufactory might be carried on; but it never was the Intent of the Legiſlature to indulge the Pride and Inſolence of a few private Perſons, who ſhall have ſome twenty or thirty Negroes about their Houſes, to do what might very well be done by five or ſix. It was not for this, I ſay, that the

Subject was indulg'd with a Liberty contrary to the Laws of God and Nature; Nothing leſs than a Manufactory, a Branch of Trade, can diſpenſe with thoſe ſacred and eternal Rules. There may be ſome indeed ſo ſcrupulous as to think, that they ſhould not be diſpens'd with at all, even for the beſt Manufactory, or moſt beneficial Trade in the World: But I own the Almighty Ship of Trade, and if my Scheme, calculated immediately for the Security of the Sugar Colonies, does not in the End prove beneficial to Trade too, all Things and their Conſequences thoroughly conſider'd, I give it up as a Romantick Euthuſiaſtick Viſion. But ſurely the ſecuring the Sugar Colonies cannot but be of Service to Commerce, and without this Regulation which I propoſe, I am confident *Jamaica* will not be long ſecure: How it is with the other Iſlands I do not know.

We read in the *Perſian* Tales, that there was a Nation (between the Tropicks I think) that caught hold of every Foreigner that came near them, and kill'd them for the ſake of their Greaſe, which it ſeems was uſeful in boiling their Soap, by which

Means

Means they ſurpaſſed all their Neighbours in that Commodity, human Tallow giving it a Beauty and Fineneſs which that of no other Animal could do. As the Author is far from being dull, we cannot take him literally, what then ſhall we think he alludes to? I think 'tis plainly to Slavery, nor is the Type unappoſite. To kill a Man for the ſake of his Greaſe, or to make him melt it away in hard Labour for another's Profit, is not ſo very unlike. An ingenuous Man might perhaps ſay as much for thoſe Savages who *kill* to better their Soap, as for us who *inſlave* to make our Sugar, and might defend their Practice of diſpatching a Man at once, and clapping him in their Cauldrons, as well as we can ours of forcing a Man to conſume away his Life in Attendance upon our Coppers. And both no doubt in Policy are right, for what ſignifies the Life or Liberty of an Outlandiſh Man, if you can but ſend better Goods to Market?

It is well known, that the Devaſtations made by the *Spaniards* among the poor *Indians* (whole Nations being cut off from the Face of the Earth) gave Birth to the Slaving Trade, that the Place of thoſe whom

whom with leſs Cruelty they puſh'd out of this World, might be fill'd up by thoſe whom they oblig'd to live miſerable in it. One Cruelty begot another, one horrid Barbarity engender'd another as horrid. Cruel Off-ſpring of a moſt cruel Parent! Yet allur'd by *Spaniſh* Gold, the Trading Countries did not diſdain the Office of Carriers, or rather Bawds and Pandars to this cruel Luſt!— that the *Frenchman*, a Slave himſelf, ſhould think it no great Matter to make others ſo, is not at all ſurpriſing; that the *Dutchman* ſhould ſacrifice every thing to Gain is not to be wonder'd at; but that the generous Free Briton, who knows the Value of Liberty, who prizes it above Life, who loves and enjoys it, and loves it the more he does enjoy it, that he ſhould for vile Lucre make a Traffick of Liberty, that he ſhould be inſtrumental in depriving others of a Bleſſing he would not part with but with Life, that he ſhould Slave, this doth ſurpriſe, grieve and torment me!

The DIALOGUE *continued.*

Of. WELL, tho' I am almoſt afraid to aſk; have you read my Stuff, what ſay you to it?

Pl. Why to be free, it is as odd as one can deſire, if Oddity will pleaſe. You ſeem'd to begin at firſt methodically, but in the End you fall into a rough rambling manner, to avoid I ſuppoſe being thought Pedantick, and to give your ſtudied Piece a frank, and if I may ſo ſay, military Air. Your ſavage Soap-makers will by no Means bear your Alluſion, nor ſoon be forgiven you, I can tell you. As to the reſt, I muſt confeſs there is a great deal of Truth in ſome Parts, particularly as to our Indolence, and total Unconcern, nay, a perfect Averſion to every new Regulation, however well adapted. But, upon the whole, I wiſh I had not read it, it puts a great many melancholy Thoughts into my Mind;

I think you muſt be ſorry yourſelf for having thought of it, but that you are ſo run away with by your Enthuſiaſm: For, to what Purpoſe is it to trouble yourſelf and the World with all this? You may as well ſtop the Tide at *London-Bridge* with your Thumb, as they ſay, as alter the Courſe of Trade and the whole Scheme of Planting by this Paper-kite of yours. Human Affairs will take their Courſe, *fluminis ritu*, as *Horace* ſays, wiſe Men go along with the Stream, and do not ridiculouſly try to turn it. All States have their Periods, which no human Care can prolong; even *Great-Britain* it is thought tends to its Ruin, if ſome ſtrong Medicines and good Alteratives are not applied.

O. To regulate and direct the Affairs of *Great-Britain* requires more Skill than I can pretend to, and ſuits not my ſmall Capacity. By good Luck they are in the Hands of good Men, Men of large Property, and of known Worth and Honour, and we do expect that they will put Things into a new Courſe, purge away ſome of our corrupt Humours, correct the bad Juices by a good wholeſome Regimen, and reſtore Health and Vigour to our crazy Conſtitution.

There can be no other good Reaſon why the *Pelham's* or Duke of *Bedford* ſhould accept of a Lead in the Miniſtry; ſhould they fail our Expectations, they would juſtly incur the Cenſure of all honeſt Men. To them therefore, I leave the Affairs of *England*, and ſhall be glad if I can think rightly of thoſe of this Iſland, and indeed I am vain enough to think I am a Maſter of this Subject, and am ſure that what I propoſe will do.

P. Will do! no doubt, and ſo there are many Things in *England* we know will *do*, could People be brought about to *do* them. If the Sinking Fund had been kept inviolable, we ſhould have been now almoſt out of Debt, and do you think Sir *Robert Walpole* did not know this then, as well as you and I do now; think you that he, and moſt of thoſe that voted with him, did not foreſee what would be the Conſequences which we now feel?

O. Well; but now we may expect better Things.

P. I hope ſo; but what I mentioned the Sinking-Fund for, was, to ſhow that People in general, Country Gentlemen as well

well as Courtiers, (for the former were as willing as the other to make free with that Fund to ſave the Land-Tax) will go on in a Way they know muſt be ruinous at laſt, rather than encounter preſent Difficulties.

O. I am ſo much of your Opinion in what you ſay now, that it is the Reaſon why I would have this Law made in *England*; for to think that the Legiſlature of this Iſland would enact it, would be indeed ridiculous.

P. It is almoſt as much ſo to expect to ſucceed in *England*. The Merchants of *London*, *Briſtol*, *Leverpool*, and all the trading Towns will be againſt you; all the Makers and Dealers in Goods ſent to *Africa* or the *Weſt-Indies*, and all the ſeveral Tradeſmen that depend again upon them, will be alarmed and ſummoned to oppoſe you; the Pen and Ink Men will be ready with their Calculations, ſtart a thouſand Difficulties you are not aware of, prove it to the Satisfaction and entire Conviction of many Thouſand well-meaning Men, that your Scheme is chimerical, ruinous, and abſurd, the Product of a crazed idle Brain.

You

You will be the Joke of the *Exchange* and City— do you like that?

O. No; but I like it better than not to dare to ſpeak out the Truth: Nor is the Matter to be decided by them, but by the Parliament. And I cannot but think I ſhall have the Countenance of the Miniſtry.

P. And do you think the Miniſtry, will, to favour your Project, diſoblige ſo many thouſand Traders?

O. If they think it right, they ſhould, or elſe they are not fit to be Miniſters, in my Mind. What Motive can a Man of Senſe and good Eſtate (but put the Eſtate out of the Queſtion; for certainly being a ſervile Courtier, is the worſt Way in the World of getting Money) what Motive I ſay, can a Man of Senſe have to trouble himſelf with the Adminiſtration of publick Affairs, but to do Good according to the beſt of his Abilities? If he is only to follow the Humours of the People, or even the Sentiments of the King himſelf, when they in his own clear Judgment tend to the Prejudice of the Nation, what is he but a miſerable, wicked, hired Serving-

man,

man, who has the worſt Place of any in the whole Kingdom. If he dares not do what his Reaſon approves of, is he not a Slave? If either of the Dukes of *Newcaſtle*, or *Bedford*, (I have a good Mind to dedicate it to one of them) ſhould tell me, Sir, your Scheme is good, highly beneficial, will hinder the Ruin of the Sugar Colonies, which otherwiſe is inevitable; but if I appear in it, I ſhall diſoblige the Merchants and *Weſt-India* Planters, and why look ſo far forward? and what is it to you or me? I ſhould out of Indignation— but I beg their Grace's Pardon for making ſo impoſſible a Suppoſition; and I think I was wrong in allowing, that all the Merchants and Tradeſmen would be againſt me; for I cannot think they would be Loſers by it in the End.

P. Not in the End perhaps, but the Merchant and Tradeſman conſider only the preſent Profit and Loſs.

O. Even that will hardly be againſt them, but ſhould it be more ſo than I imagine, I can't think ſo bad of them, as that they would oppoſe a publick Benefit, becauſe it might a little prejudice

the Trade they are engaged in; can't they follow other Branches of Trade?

P. But there is another more material Objection, if no more Negroes are brought in, no more new Eſtates can be made; Planting will be at a Stand, or rather fall back; for it is notorious that in moſt Plantations more die than are born there.

O. That is one great Evil that I aim at mending; Negroes are as fruitful as white People, and I cannot ſee why they would not encreaſe and multiply by the Courſe of Generation, if they were not over-wrought. When I hear it cited as a Maxim among the *French*, that if a Negroe is well work'd, it is no great Matter if he lives but three Years, in which Time he will pay ſufficiently for himſelf, my Blood riſes at it. I am glad it is a *French* Maxim, and indeed I believe few *Engliſh* are guilty of ſuch Cruelty. What chiefly contributes to there being ſo few Children among the *Engliſh* Negroes is the Practice of the Wenches in procuring Abortions. As they lie with both Colours, and do nor know which the Child may prove of, to diſoblige neither, they ſtifle it in the Birth.

P. Have you a Secret then to make the Negroe Wenches chaſte, and conſtant, tho' but to a Colour?

O. Good Sir, I don't ſay I have; but it is certain, that as the Encreaſe of Cattle, and their Fruitfulneſs in Breeding, depends much on good Huſbandry, ſo does that of Mankind depend in a great Meaſure upon prudent Regulations. As whimſical as it may ſeem (not more whimſical however than many of the *Spartan* Inſtitutions) if a little Linnen, or other Neceſſaries, were given to every Wench that was brought to Bed, and all the barren ones whipt upon a certain Day every Year, I fancy the Negroe Ladies would yield better, and at leaſt keep up the preſent Stock. To prevent your Archneſs, I don't lay any Streſs on this Device of mine, tho' if I had a Mind I could well ſupport it. I remember ſomewhat in the *French Perſian* Letters to this Purpoſe, that the Fruitfulneſs of Mankind depends upon a mere Trifle, a ſmall Turn given to the Imagination; and he inſtances in the *Jews*, who, in hopes of producing a Meſſiah, marry young, and fall to it with great Earneſtneſs; the Meſſiah never comes,

but young *Jews* are brought into the World in Abundance.

Without having recourſe to Sacred Hiſtory, and telling you that the World that was drowned came all from one Pair; and that the preſent Race of Men that were ſo ſoon after the Deluge, ſpread over all our Globe, ſprung from *Noah*; and that the Sons of *Abraham* in particular were in a Century or two like the Sands of the Sea: It is moſt certain, that Men, as well as all other Creatures, will increaſe if there are no outward Cauſes to prevent it, as War, Peſtilence, and Famine, or what is worſe than all, debauched Manners: And that the Manners of Mankind might be mended by wholeſome Laws, and People encouraged to propagate, has been the Opinion of the wiſeſt Legiſlators. The *Julian* Laws againſt Adulteries, and other Enormities, and the *Jus trium Liberorum* are Inſtances of the Kind. What may be the proper Laws in our Caſe, I need not trouble myſelf or you with conſidering, the People themſelves will fall into ſuch when they are under a Neceſſity, and can have no Supply of Negroes otherwiſe; and that is the chief Good of my Law to put them

them under that Neceſſity. It will take away that fooliſh Imagination, and Hopes the Planters now have, that if they can, by hook or by crook, Money or Credit, get Negroes enough, they ſhall have Mountains of Gold, and that let them be in ever ſo great a Diſtreſs, the buying more Negroes will bring them out of it; more Negroes, is, like the *grand Arcanum*, to work Wonders, do every Thing, ſupply every Want, and anſwer every Expectation. If a Man can't pay his Creditor this Year, it is but the next to lay on ſo many more Negroes, and ſo many more Hogſheads will be made, and the Debt is paid. Nay, ſome have carried the Matter ſo far, that upon the Conſpiracy in St. *John*'s Pariſh the other Day, they bought new Negroes to check and keep in Awe the old ones. Strange! that People that were driven to this Expedient, ſhould not bethink themſelves of their dangerous Situation, and apply themſelves heartily to get out of it. For to ſay no worſe of it, it is the Caſe of a Debtor, who to pay off one Man who preſſes him, borrows of another at a higher Premium; the Time of Payment is in-

deed a little protracted, but the Debt is increaſed, and the Ability to diſcharge it leſs. 'Tis certain, beſides that out of a Rage to puſh on their Eſtates, as their Term is, many buy more Negroes than they have taken care to get Proviſions for; ſome of the poor Creatures pine away and are ſtarved, others that have ſomewhat more Spirits, go a ſtealing, and are ſhot as they are caught in other Proviſion Grounds; others are whipt, or even hang'd for going into the Woods, into which Hunger and Neceſſity itſelf drives them to try to get Food to keep Life and Soul together.

Are Men's Lives ſo to be ſported with? Are Men to be ſo much at the Mercy of another Man? Are the Lives of human Creatures, I ſay, to be play'd with in ſuch a Manner, juſt as a giddy thoughtleſs Planter thinks fit? Is it not ſomething to prevent ſuch ſhocking Proceedings? If I gain nothing elſe by my Law, that will be worth while.

[*Here they are interrupted by the ſquawling of a Negroe under a Correction.*] He goes on; Zounds! what a Howling is there! I hear every now and then from that Houſe ſuch Shrieks as pierce my very Soul;

Soul; that *Jew* is eternally whipping and tormenting his Negroes, I wll be damn'd if he doth not crucify them out of downright Mockery; 'tis intolerable!

" *To ſee the Sufferings of my Fellow Creatures;*
" *They that bear this are Villains, and I one,*
" *Not to rouze up at the great Call of Nature,*
" *And own myſelf a Man.*"

No! I'll not be a Villain, as you term it rightly, *Otway*; — Negroes I will befriend you, — ye poor black Devils, I will redreſs you.

P. Well; but ſit down, don't rant away ſo much; to return to our Diſcourſe concerning the Propagation of Negroes.

O. I think I have ſaid as much as I can on that Head, to prove that with Care you may at leaſt keep up the preſent Number; and why you ſhould not be obliged to that Care, I do not ſee. And if no Slaves for the future are allowed to be bred to Trades, nor any to be kept in the Houſe, I dare ſay you will have by that Means four or five thouſand more for the Field; not leſs I believe than that Number being employed in both thoſe Ways.

Beſides, that your *Creol* Negroes are worth two or three Salt-water ones, as you call them; ſo that I really think your Plantations will rather be forwarded in a Year or two by my Scheme.

P. You go on a little too faſt: As to the Houſe Negroes I give them up; but if we had not Slaves of our own to mend our Mills and our Coppers, and hoop our Caſks, and do many other Works, we muſt often ſtand ſtill, and could not ſend our Sugars to Market. There is no Dependance on white Men, and they are ſo extravagant in their Prices.

O. As to their extravagant Prices, I queſtion much whether that is not occaſioned greatly by the very Thing that you are contending for; *viz.* the allowing Slaves to be bred to Trades. Two or three white Men with their Slaves, and about a Score of free Negroes and Mulattoes, with their Slaves, ſeem to do all the Maſons, Bricklayers, and Carpenters Work in and about this Town. Suppoſe the Slaves employed by theſe white and Negroe Freemen to be about two hundred; and that one of theſe white Artificers ſhall have about thirty or forty, it is plain he muſt

mono-

monopolize all the Work, and in Fact it is monopolized. I never have employed but one Man ſince I have been here, and never ſee any other employed go where I will. The others can only get ſuch Jobs as he cares not for, or cannot attend to, and muſt be in a manner dependant upon him, and will at leaſt join with him in keeping up the Price of Labour. Whereas were there two hundred free Tradeſmen independant one of another, that had no Way of getting their Livelihood, but by their own Work, ſuch a Number could not combine together to extort high Prices, and Neceſſity would force them to ſeek out Employment; by which means the Price of Proviſions would in a great meaſure regulate the Price of Labour, as in all other Countries almoſt it doth. Now you cannot hire a Negroe Labourer for leſs than three Bits a-day, tho' his Maſter allows him but three, and ſome but two a Week to live upon.

Were Artificers not allowed to breed up Slaves to their Trades, they would be obliged to work themſelves; now the free Negroe works no more than to buy two or three Slaves, which he teaches; by their

their Work he buys more, and never afterwards touches a Stroke; and that is the Ruin of your free Negroes and Mulattoes, who are by this means, a lazy debauched Race, a very Nuſance to the Community; whereas, were they obliged to live upon their own Work, they might be made extremely uſeful, and a very good Part of your Militia.

P. Suppoſe I allow you that it would be right to debar the free Negroe or Mulattoe from having Slave-Tradeſmen, yet why debar the white Man? If ſo few Artificers come to us now, when thoſe that do, and happen to be able to procure Slaves, get ſo greatly, if they were to be debarred from that Privilege, and could work only for themſelves, we ſhould certainly have ſtill fewer.

O. I own I am not clear in the Matter; but I rather think the contrary, and that we ſhould have more ſettle and live with us, (as for their coming to us, that would be the ſame, for no body now comes that can live tolerably in *England)* my Reaſon for my Opinion is this; —— when a new Artificer arrives, he muſt be content at firſt, till he can look about him, to be a Drudge

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to ſome of theſe old Standers and grandee Tradeſmen, if I may ſo call them, or he will get no Employment; and it is ten to one if theſe Grandees will encourage any one of Genius; whereas, if all the Tradeſmen were free, out of a great Number, far the greateſt Part would be fit only to be Drudges, and would neceſſarily hire themſelves to work under thoſe of greater Skill, who were able to lay Plans, and undertake Works by the Great. Now an *Engliſhman*, juſt arrived, would be as able to hire as well as the beſt old Stander, and he would be as likely to be thought, or really to be as good a Genius as any of them. As Things are now, the Maſter of Slave Tradeſmen alone get Money, then the Man of Skill would be chiefly encouraged: So that I am really of Opinion it would be better for the Tradeſman that is a new Comer, that no Slaves ſhould be allowed to be bred to Trades. I know with regard to Pilots in particular, that the Aſſembly having allowed the Governor to licenſe Slaves to exerciſe that Function, upon a Pretence that white Men could not then be got (which I can hardly believe was the Caſe, it being ſo beneficial a Buſineſs)

ſineſs) it has ſo happened ſince, that now white Men cannot be got; the Reaſon of which I take to be this. A white Man doth not care to be put upon the ſame Foot — with Negroes, and ſerve with them under another; he will be now nothing leſs than a Maſter Pilot, nor can he as ſuch without licenſed Slaves get Bread himſelf; he cannot be always out himſelf; whereas he whoſe Slaves are licenſed, can lie a-bed and get all the Buſineſs himſelf, by ſending out his Slaves. I am apt to think there is ſome ſuch Cauſe as this with reſpect to all other Trades that makes the allowing Slaves to exerciſe them ſo fatal: For it is Fact, and may be laid down as an infallible Maxim, that whatever you allow to be done by Slaves, you will never afterwards get white Men to do. Let us therefore take Courage once, and ſee whether we cannot carry on our Trades without them for the future. You would ſoon in my Opinion have free Artificers enough.

I don't know what time it takes up, whether three, four or five Years, for a Man to learn a Trade, but whatever it be, the Regulation I propoſe, would not be felt till the Expiration of that Term, and

if by that Time it ſhould be found that Freemen could not be got, an Indulgenc might be given for a limited Number of Slaves in each Plantation ; tho' where would be the Harm if you were to free every Negroe you thought fit to make a Tradeſman, indenting him for fourteen Years, or ſome large Term. The Difference would not be much to the Maſter, but a great deal in the Eaſe and Satisfaction of the poor Negroe. If you would do the ſame by ſuch as you uſe for Drivers, making them free upon Condition to ſerve ſuch a Number of Years, it would be no real Loſs to the Maſter ; it would effectually ſecure their Fidelity, and they would keep the reſt in Obedience. If it ſhould be aſk'd why I am ſo impertinently for hindering People to do with their own Slaves as they think fit ; I anſwer, I do it for their own Good and Security ; for the ſame Reaſon for which any Laws are made at all, which are all Reſtraints upon private Liberty for the general Good. To me it is a perfect Solæciſm to truſt a Slave with Power ; the St. *John*'s Conſpiracy ſhow'd the Abſurdity of that Practice, it being you know carried on by about a Dozen Drivers

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of different Plantations, who would by the Power they had over the reſt, moſt certainly have got them to join with them, if they had not been providentially diſcover'd. The Head of them all was a Favourite, a kind of Overſeer, rather over the White Man of the Plantation than under him. As that Conſpiracy gives us Warning not to employ Slaves as Drivers, or truſt them with any Power, ſo the laſt little Rebellion teaches us to beware of Slave-Tradeſmen, almoſt all that Gang being ſuch; the chief was a Bricklayer, and ſome of the others, Smiths in the King's own Yard.

P. I ſuppoſe then when you can get the Parliament to paſs ſuch a Law as you deſire, you will be for forbiding Slaves to be bred Trades.

O. Indeed ſhall I, as likewiſe for forbiding Houſe-Slaves, but the main Thing, is, to prevent the Importation of more for Sale, — that is the Burden of my Song. Let no more Negroes be brought in, and you will make the beſt of thoſe you have.

P. Since you lay ſuch a Streſs on there being no more Negroes imported for Sale

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in the Iſland, I think you may be pretty eaſy; for if the Price of Negroes goes on increaſing as it has done, or even keeps as it is, there will be an End to buying without your Law.

O. Now then is the Time for my Law, none but the very richeſt will be affected by it; a poor or middling Man can't afford to give near 50 *l.* for a new Negroe, nor can it anſwer but to very few, who muſt have very good Land, not Negroes enough to cultivate it, and have Money to ſpare. And were once my Law in Force, if I am not greatly deceiv'd, all other Regulations, both thoſe I have mention'd and others that may be ſtill better, would follow as it were of Courſe. And were your Slaves once brought under Good-management and Diſcipline, were there a proper Number of Freemen, White, Black, or Yellow, mix'd with them in every Plantation, one to ten or twelve at moſt, they would be better kept to their Work and do twice as much, there would be no Fear of their running into the Woods, they would not have the Power if they had the Inclination, but probably they would not have a

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Thought of it, for 'tis Slackneſs of Diſcipline and Cruelty both together, which fill the Woods with Rebels; the latter puts the poor Creatures upon the Thought of it, and the former gives them the Hopes of effecting it.

P. But can you think that the Planter will conſent to make one in ten or twelve of his Negroes free?

O. Not altogether free; but in the manner I propoſe, I am ſure he would if he thought rightly, and ſave by it too. Beſides, there would be free Negroes or Mulattoes to be hir'd, and ſo long as there is one Freeman to ten Slaves in a Plantation, I do not care which way it is. A Friend of mine that has a Pen and a few Negroes took it in his Head a Year ago to try what I am now propoſing, and finds it anſwer to his Expectation. Perceiving his Driver was diligent, he told him one Day he would make him free, provided he would ſerve him ſtill as a Driver for ſeven Years. The Fellow was overjoy'd, had his Manumiſſion, and put his Mark to the Indenture for ſeven Years the ſame Day, and ſince has prov'd a moſt induſtrious Officer, and

and the other Negroes are induſtrious too, hoping one Day or other to merit the ſame Reward. And what has my Friend loſt by it? For the firſt ſeven Years he loſes nothing, 'tis plain, but gains by his Negroes being more induſtrious, and by the Chearfulneſs with which Work goes on;— the Whip is not heard in his Pen. And at the End of the ſeven Years, will not this Driver be made happy by the Grant of fifteen or twenty Acres, (of which almoſt every Planter has enough to ſpare) at an eaſy Rent, or ſome Service in Lieu of it. Will not this Man when he becomes a Freeholder and Tenant, under certain Conditions to the State, be ſtill uſeful to it? Won't he be ready to go out upon Parties or againſt a Foreign Enemy (for Parties againſt the Rebels would be at an End if ſuch Methods were purſued) and could he not be truſted? Which the Slave cannot be ſo well, at leaſt ſurely. Was ſuch a Method to be taken in every Sugar Plantation, there would be in every one almoſt a tolerable Company of free Negroes fit for Arms, which would be of vaſt Service, and what would the Owner loſe? For the

firſt ſeven Years, as I ſaid before, he would loſe nothing. At the End of the ſeven Years indeed, he would be oblig'd to give each of the freed Negroes ſome Land, but as all Eſtates almoſt have more than enough to ſpare, that would be parting away with nothing, and yet he might reaſonably demand a Rent or Service for it, ſo that he ſtill would have ſome Good out of the freed Negroe, very near as much as he has from his Slave, only by giving Land that is uſeleſs to himſelf. And as to Land, muſt it not be given to the Slaves too, in which I have heard they are ſeldom ſtinted as to a particular Quantity, but only in general to ſuch a Place among them, where they may range as they liſt, and love to be ſpreading and opening new Ground. The only Difference then with reſpect to the Land, is, that the Maſter can turn out the Slave when he pleaſes; and tho' Maſters are fond of that Power, and have not the Heart to part with it, it is a fooliſh Fondneſs or Covetouſneſs, for they never ought to make uſe of that Power, and never do without giving a general Diſſatisfaction to all their Negroes, and inſtead of keeping them

them in greater Dependance, as they foolishly imagine, or having a greater hold on them by it, they have less, for there is no such sure Way of holding a Man as by his Interest; as that is certain or precarious, so will be the Hold or Attachment. A free Negroe that has fifteen or twenty Acres of his own that he can't be turn'd out of, will defend it with his Life against the *French* or *Spaniards*; he has his little All to lose if the Enemy prevails, and will be in Danger likewise of being made a Slave. And on the contrary, the Slave has nothing to lose if the Enemy prevails, and if he goes over to him may get his Liberty. 'Tis plain therefore, you may be sure of the free Negroes standing by you, whereas you will be in Danger of every Slave's turning against you, that is not well watch'd and kept under by good Discipline.— What a Difference then would there be in our Situation in Point of Security, were my Friend's Example to be follow'd, and the Property we should part with for it would be trifling. What a Satisfaction would it be, when we heard of an Enemy's designing to invade us, if such a Method should

have been taken before-hand. People would not need then, as they did lately, inſure their Eſtates at 10 *per Cent.* and that for ſix Months only, and ſome could not inſure at that Rate. Make one of your beſt Negroes out of every ten free, as I have propos'd, that is the beſt 10 *per Cent.* Inſurance, you will need no other. But to wind up my long Diſcourſe, ſince the Advantage in Point of Security would be ſo great, and what you part with for it ſo inconſiderable, can one help wondering that there ſhould be ſo much Trouble in perſuading you Planters into it; is there not ſomething in being ſecure, which is worth paying a little for? What ſay you, Sir, to all this?

P. I can't anſwer immediately off hand, upon a Point which one can perceive you have been long thinking on: But I am very ſure you will get no one to follow your Friend's Example; tell me Truth, is he not a little whimſical, ſomewhat of the ſame? hah! whatever he may expect, he will find at the End of the ſeven years, that this truſty Driver of his will leave him, for when he is free, will he not do

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as he pleaſes, go where he will; how can you fix him to the Plantation when he is free?

O. Spoke like a *Weſt-Indian*, (you will forgive me in Return to your Suppoſition of my Friend's Whimſicalneſs, and Innuendo on myſelf) you know no Medium in Things; a Man with you muſt be either abſolutely a Slave, or licentiouſly free, free from all Reſtraints of Law.— I remember how a Bill for taking up all Vagabonds and ſuch as had no viſible Way of Livelihood, was treated and ſcouted a Seſſion or two ago, and prov'd to be a manifeſt Invaſion of the Liberty of the Subject, who had a Right to be as idle and profligate as he pleas'd.—How ſhall I fix him do you ſay? I will fix him by Law. No free Negroe ſhould be allow'd to be in the Towns that was not an Artificer, no Land ſhou'd be given by the Governor to any ſuch freed Negroe. Where could he go, or where would he be ſo well as about the Eſtate, which he probably would be fond of too, as having been bred in it: There he ſhould have Land, but not without reaſonable Conditions, to pay Rent or do Service, or

partly one, partly the other, all which might be regulated by Law, nor would there be any Difficulty at all in it. I warrant when the Law paſt in *Henry* the VIIth's Time, enacting, "That all Houſes "of Huſbandry that were uſed with 20 "Acres of Ground or upwards, ſhould be "maintain'd and kept up for ever, toge-"ther with a compleat Proportion of Land, "*&c.*" Many murmur'd and others laugh'd at it, ſome objecting againſt the Reſtraint, others that it could not poſſibly be put into Execution; calling it whimſical, as you do my Friend, (the Word ſticks you ſee) for what an odd Conceit is it! why muſt a Houſe becauſe it has once been built be kept up, with ſuch a Quantity of Land, not leſs than 20 Acres? May not a Man change his Mind? Muſt he go on tilling the Ground he once has till'd, and maintaining a Houſe eternally becauſe he once thought fit to build it? In ſhort, may he not do what he thinks fit with his own? Theſe, and many more ſuch ſhrewd Objections I doubt not were made then by our Fore-fathers; yet this Law was put in Force, and to it, both Lord *Bacon* and *Harrington* (no bad Poli-

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ticians neither) attribute the Goodneſs of the *Engliſh* Infantry and the Superiority we had over the *French* in our Battles. As this Law provided a Houſe and a Competence of Land about it to maintain a Yeoman in good Heart, fit for his King and Country's Service, Lord *Bacon* look'd upon it as making a Nurſery for Foot-Soldiers, and calls it very prettily, if I remember right, " Secretly ſowing *Hydra*'s " Teeth, (according to the Poet's Fiction) " from which arm'd Men ſhould riſe up " for the Service of the Kingdom." Let me ſow ſome of theſe Teeth in this Country, we want them much; and ſurely if we had ſome of them ſcatter'd about in each Plantation, if ſome of theſe *Hydra* Teeth-Men (if I may ſo call them) ſhould ſtart up and place themſelves between every ten Slaves, they would not only be ready for the Service of the Iſland againſt a Foreign Enemy, but they would effectually hinder the Poſſibility of more Rebellions from your Negroes, which you find you are ſtill in Danger of, and yet will take no Steps, no cautionary Meaſures to prevent, notwithſtanding what you ſuffer'd before the

late Rebels ſubmitted in 1739. I am told it did not coſt the Country leſs than ten or twelve Thouſand a Year in Parties before that Time, beſides the Lives of ſome Hundreds of white Men in the courſe of a few Years, who were harraſs'd to Death, not many kill'd, but dying by mere Fatigue in that hard Service; ſo that the Iſland muſt have been almoſt depopulated or ruin'd by this Time, if that Accident had not happen'd. What has been, may be, nay, muſt be, in the looſe undiſciplin'd Manner, in which all Things are in this Iſland. Then, you wou'd wiſh for my black Sons of *Hydra*, then, more than one Negroe in ten would be wanting, to be employ'd in your own Defence, and the Purſuit of the Rebels; ſo many at leaſt would be taken from your Plantations and ſent into the Woods, and yet they would do no good, and yet they would be ſent, to ſeem to be doing ſomething, or to put ſome Money perhaps in ſome-bodies Pockets. Many of them would deſert to the Rebels, the others would not be hearty or obedient, and all for want of being duly prepar'd by ſome ſuch Regimen as I propoſe. Don't

you know that it happen'd ſo formerly? Did any Party hardly ever go out that did not add ſome Recruits to the Rebels? Awake, for Shame, ye Planters awake! I will not trouble you or myſelf to ſhow that even in Point of preſent Profit in the meer Plantation-way, one truſty Man that look'd after ten, would make thoſe ten do twice the Work they do now; for this muſt be evident at firſt View, to any one that ever ſaw Negroes work, unleſs in ſome very few Plantations: And beſides, I am quite tir'd, and deſire to adjourn the Debate.

P. With all my Heart, adjourn, for I am quite tir'd too.

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The DIALOGUE *continued.*

P. I Have been talking ſince with ſome of my Brother Planters about your Notion of hindering Slaves from being bred to Trades, and they are almoſt all to a Man, tooth and nail againſt it, and no one more ſo than a Gentleman whom you muſt allow to be very publick-ſpirited, entirely diſintereſted, and extreamly clear-headed.

O. I know who you mean; he has ſurpriz'd me much when I have talk'd with him on the Subject; but there is no one in the World, that has not ſome Prejudice, which there is no Poſſibility of removing. He knows he can't now get white Tradeſmen as often as he would, and that if he had not Smiths, Carpenters and other Tradeſmen of his own, his Mills would very often ſtand ſtill: But he doth not, I think, conſider enough what it is owing to, and the Diffe-

Difference there would be as ſoon as my Law took place. There would then be enough free Tradeſmen to be had, before his own could die away;— now a few Freemen are bred to Trades, the whole Buſineſs being ingroſs'd by a few Maſters of Slaves, who find ſuch Profit in teaching them Trades. But that pernicious Power being once taken away, you would ſoon have Freemen enough of one Colour or the other, for all your Trades. There are the Negroe Towns, which would ſupply you with many Children fit for ſome Trade or another. They would then be ſought after, now no-body will care to take them as Apprentices, when he can get ſo much by teaching his own Slaves. The breeding the wild Negroes to Trades would have another good Effect in aſſuring their Obedience. The Children would be in a manner Hoſtages for the Fidelity of the Parents; and they would beſides be taken by Degrees out of that ſavage Way, and made uſeful to the Community. There is another Thing I would propoſe; I would open an Aſylum for all *French* and *Spaniſh* Negroes, who ſhould be declar'd free

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the Moment they touched the *Jamaica* Shore: This would afford you another Supply out of which Tradeſmen might be got.

P. But you could not do that, if we were at Peace with them; would it not be againſt the Law of Nations?

O. If it be wrong and oppreſſive, as I think I have proved, to make People Slaves, it cannot be wrong to contribute to their Delivery, and give Refuge to the Oppreſs'd. The *Spaniards* have always done it by us whenever it ſuited them, as at *St. Auguſtine*, where all the *Carolina* Negroes have been always ſure to meet with a good Reception. Our *Moſkito*-Shore Negroes too, meet with a ſure Aſylum in *Guatimala*. It doth not ſuit the *French* to begin ſuch a Practice, as they in *Hiſpaniola* have a greater Number of Negroes in Proportion to the *Whites* than even we have in this Iſland, and beſides are remarkable for their Severity, and being to Windward our Negroes could not get to them.

Of this I am perſwaded, whatever Nation in *America* declares firſt for Liberty, and abſolutely aboliſhes Slavery, muſt be Maſters of the whole Continent, or as much

much of it as they pleaſe. It was ſtrange Stupidity in us to make the *Indians* Slaves; — I don't believe, when the Law that put a Stop to it took Place, there were above fifty in the whole Iſland, and they not good for much, and yet we got the Hatred of all the *Indian* Nations by it, being more odious to them than the very *Spaniards*: Whereas otherwiſe they would naturally on all Occaſions have aſſiſted us againſt them; and I am perſwaded that in about ſome twenty or thirty Years hence, when all the Slaves we have of their Nation ſhall be dead, and the *Indians* will be ſure they may rely on us, that we ſhall make the *Spaniards* Hearts ake, whenever we pleaſe to make a Deſcent on the Iſthmus of *Darien*, or any other Part of the *Weſt-Indies*. Could I but ſee, at the ſame time, the Regulations I have propoſed, or better, take Place, one Free-man over every ten Slaves, each Free-man to have a fixed and ſure Property in the Eſtate, no Slave puniſhed arbitrarily at Caprice, but by the Conſent of the Majority of five at leaſt of theſe Free-men. Could I but ſee, I ſay, ſome ſuch Regulations made, and no more

more Negroes (which I can never omit) to be imported for the Uſe of the Iſland, I ſhould then think *Jamaica* as ſecure as *England*; your Lands would be doubled or trebled in Value, and this Iſland would be a Jewel in the Crown little inferior to that of *Ireland*.—How charmingly are we ſituated for Trade! Were a proper Convoy of Men of War to go with every Fleet of Merchant-men over to the Coaſt, between *Carthagene* and *Porto-bel*, we might hold a Fair there, and a rich one too, whenever we would, which would bring in Dollars and Dubloons, my Friend, to ſend to *England*, and refreſh their empty Coffers.— But what is the Matter with you, you don't mind me?

P. I was thinking I own of your Treatiſe, and after all, ſeriouſly I think, upon conſidering the Matter fully, you would do better to ſuppreſs it; — do, let me ſend for a Candle and burn it; or, according to the Song, as a Man would ſerve a Cucumber, let me throw it away. I would not diſparage your Performance, it is well ſeaſoned enough, the Oil and Vinegar, Pepper and Salt, tolerably well mixed, nothing

thing remains now in Form, but to throw it away; do, take my Advice, you cannot imagine what Trouble you will otherwiſe expoſe yourſelf to.

O. I don't care.

P. The whole Iſland, inſtead of thanking you for your Care, ſhould they ſuſpect you for the Author, will have you in Abhorrence.

O. I am reſolv'd.

P. You will repent.

O. I'll die a Martyr firſt. Could *Cæſar* and *Catiline* undergo ſuch infinite Labours, encounter ſuch immenſe Difficulties and Dangers, doing Miſchief, and ſubverting the Liberties of their Country, for the Sake of Power only; and ſhall not I, do Good, to render the Miſerable happy, to ſecure a Colony, and make it flouriſh, venture the Scorn, or utmoſt Malice of Mankind? I will die with Pleaſure to carry ſuch a Point.

P. Always romantick and viſionary! What the Devil of Similitude is there between the grand Scheme of thoſe two, tho' wicked, yet great Commanders, for the Maſtery of the World, and your future

Project

Project for the Regulation of a few Slaves. I warrant, great Sir, you think of dying fiercely at the Head of an Army like the one, or compoſing yourſelf with great Decency in your Fall like the other; your very Enemies applauding the Grace and Dignity with which you go off the Stage. — No, Sir, nothing like it,— all that will happen to you, is, that if you ſhould happen to ſhow your Head upon the 'Change, either at *London* or *Briſtol*, or any great trading Town, the Maſters of Ships, and others concerned in the *Guinea* Trade, will crowd about you, get you among them, huſtle, ſqueeze, and trample you to Death, as ſome had like to have ſerved Sir *Richard* for his Exciſe Scheme, if he had not been well ſupported by his *Scotch* Guards who were about his Perſon.

O. I am not ſuch a Stoical Coxcomb as you would make me, to be concerned about the Manner of my Death; the End one is in Purſuit of is the Thing, and ſince you drive me ſo hard, I muſt tell you, and if I am tedious, (as who is not who talks of himſelf?) you muſt thank yourſelf for it.

I was always, even in my young Days, of a ſerious, melancholy Diſpoſition; not ſuch a Melancholy as was ſorrowful, ſour or uneaſy, but ſuch a one as had a Mixture of ſober Chearfulneſs with it, and was altogether pleaſing and agreeable to myſelf, however gloomy it might appear to others. Now my Youth is gone, the Heat and Paſſions of Youth are gone too, and better Affections have taken Place. I find in myſelf an Inclination to do, and a vaſt Pleaſure in doing Good. I cannot expreſs to you the Pleaſure I had when I firſt perceived diſtinctly this Inclination within myſelf; I hail'd, I welcom'd, I addreſs'd myſelf to it, as if it was ſome other Being or Spirit within me, and not a Part of myſelf. But I muſt own, I find my Inclination very faint and ſmall; I have endeavoured wrongly, I think, to ſeparate and refine it too much from a Deſire of Glory, by which I may perhaps have render'd it purer, but certainly have made it weaker. I think indeed of doing Good, I muſe about it, I will it, but it is but a bare Velleity, no ſtrong Impulſe, no Force driving me on; afraid

therefore to check it, I give way to it as oft as it comes upon me, that by thus encouraging, I may at laſt improve it to ſomething; I indulge in it, that it may grow by Indulgence; if I ſhould check it I am afraid I ſhould loſe it, which I would not for the World. No, good Spirit! let me never loſe thee, never reſiſt thy ſacred Motions; —to reſiſt thee, is to reſiſt, methinks, and ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, for ſure thou art the Comforter; thou haſt made me happy. Lo! a Son of *Adam* is happy, happy to his own Heart's Deſire; but thro' thee alone, without thee worſe than the Beaſts of the Field. O ſacred Spirit, by whom I am ally'd to ſuperior Natures, and even to the Supreme himſelf, take up thy Reſidence within me; poſſeſs me whole, drive away all baſe Inclinations, all corrupt Affections, all Fear, all Cunning, and every thing that is grievous to thy righteous Nature; fill me with generous Reſolutions, and a noble Ardour to do Good; to do the Thing I ought, what is right and becoming my Nature. Oh! never leave, never abandon me; for without thy heavenly Light, it is Darkneſs all; dark, dark, dark

dark, comfortleſs and dark! I will never offend Thee, never ceaſe to follow thy divine Inſpirations; I am determin'd, yes, where'er Thou lead'ſt Thy faithful Soldier, I will on; no Toils or Dangers ſhall obſtruct my March.

[*Here he went on with a great deal of rapturous Stuff, while the Planter was ſtaring all the Time, till he began to recover, and went on.*]

But I forgot myſelf, where was I?

P. In the Clouds, or ſomewhere above them; how many Thouſand Conferences have you had with *Gabriel* or *Michael*? I think *Mahomet* had ninety-nine Thouſand in leſs Time.

O. Well ſaid my Friend, ſince you laugh at me, it is Time to give over—but will you go along with me to Col. ——— who has invited me to drink ſome *Burgundy* juſt come. After a Glaſs or two I ſhall forget my Scheme, and think no more of what will become of *Jamaica*, than you Planters do.

FINIS.

FINIS